

PEKING GARDEN

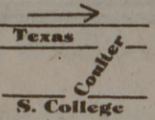
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Taiwanese feel safe in China

Fishermen smuggle goods

United Press International
PINGTAN ISLAND, China — One look at Lee Bao, a middle-aged veteran of the East China Sea, tells any bystander he is not an ordinary Chinese fisherman.

The solid gold watch, jade ring, bright sports shirt and yellow packet of "Long Life" cigarettes are the markings of another place — Taiwan.

In the past five years, Bao and hundreds of other Taiwanese fishermen have come to Pingtan Island, an oval mass of granite punctured with small harbors off China's southern coast, to engage in illegal trade, seek shelter from typhoons and search for relatives.

Although the Nationalist Chinese government considers this "enemy territory," Bao feels the real threat is returning to Taiwan, not being in China.

"I'm safe here. We are welcomed warmly," he said. "But when I go back to Taiwan, I will have to avoid the Taiwan patrol boats, especially if I try to carry mainland goods with me."

"If I am caught, I may lose my boat and go to jail," Bao said. (For that reason, the fisherman asked that a fictitious name be used for this story).

Estimates of indirect trade last year between China and Taiwan through Hong Kong and other Asia ports range from \$300 million to \$400 million, with the balance of trade in Taiwan's favor. In addition, tens of millions of dollars worth of Taiwanese goods are smuggled to Chinese black markets by fishermen.

Many Taiwanese fishermen active in illegal trade bring electronic goods, watches and textile yarn with them. Because U.S. greenbacks are the currency usually used for payment, Taiwanese goods are sold in Fujian without customs duty.

Those willing to play a cat-and-mouse game in Taiwan waters often try to smuggle back Chinese medicinal plants and herbs.

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The Taiwan fishermen keep their vessels on the east side of Pingtan

and stay at a four-story reception center, where framed Peking statements urging peaceful reunification hang in the hallways.

The center, opened in 1981, is one of four hostels for Taiwan fishermen along the Fujian Province coastline directly facing Taiwan, 100 miles away.

Fishermen who have come to visit relatives, seek medical care, repair their boats or take shelter from storms in the 100-mile-wide Taiwan Straits are given free room and board.

Taiwan relaxed travel restrictions in 1980 and thousands of Taiwan citizens have visited Fujian, the ancestral home of many, by getting permits to Hong Kong and taking the train from the British colony.

Peking officials hope such non-political contact will stimulate trust in their promise not to change Taiwan's economic and social system if the Nationalists reunify.

"During the first few days, a lot of them are a little nervous or scared about being here because of the propaganda they have heard in Taiwan but they then become more comfortable about their safety," said Lin Jiang, a Fujian official in charge of overseas Chinese affairs.

To promote reunification and put on its best face, Peking has made Fujian a model for China's Open Door policy and capitalist-style changes.

The 40-square-mile Pingtan, the closest point between the mainland and Taiwan, is a showcase of social reforms. Living standards still are far below Taiwan's, but the Taiwanese can't help noticing the constant din of private home construction made possible by the new income scheme.

More than 200 Taiwan citizens have moved to Fujian since 1979 when Peking launched a campaign for peaceful reunification, Jiang said.

Friendly dogs may bite children

United Press International

CHICAGO — Although dog owners may believe their pets bite children only when provoked, a University of Wisconsin researcher says the majority of such incidents occur when a youngster is behaving well.

Bites from "friendly dogs" send thousands of children to emergency rooms every year, and one out of every 50 children suffers a severe bite on the face before the age of 14, said Trudy Karlson, an epidemiologist at the University of Wisconsin Center for Health Systems Research and Analysis.

Dr. Karlson said her study of Dane County, Wis., children who suffered severe dog bites over a two-year period revealed that only 2 to 6 percent of the bites occur when the dog is being abused.

In an article for the Journal of the

American Medical Association, she said children nationwide suffer an estimated 44,000 facial injuries per year from dog bites. About 16,000 of the injuries are severe, she said.

Dr. Karlson said the younger the child, the greater risk of a facial bite, since the younger child's face is closer to or at the level of a dog's mouth.

Friendly dogs may bite children as an extension of "mouthing behavior," she said. When dogs are playing with each other, one dog can grab the other's face with his mouth. When he feels the bony skeleton of the other dog's snout, "that lets him know not to bite any deeper," she said.

"But children don't have that kind of bony surface, and by the time the dog gets to the bony area, he can do a lot of soft tissue damage," Dr. Karl-

son said. "I think that a lot of people forget that dogs are animals, and can engage in basic animal behavior with other animals that happen to be human children."

"They assume that dogs will behave according to the rules of human behavior," she said.

Parents often believe they can protect their children from injury by making sure they approach dogs in a non-threatening manner. But many of the dog bite victims are under 4 years old — too young for them to understand the danger.

And even older children who have been taught how to behave around dogs can be harmed, Dr. Karlson said.

She cited one 10-year-old who approached a previously friendly dog. "The boy did everything right, and

the dog jumped up and severed the kid's nose," she said.

She also pointed out, "We really encourage a lot of direct eye contact for babies to look us in the face. That facing-off behavior may seem threatening to a pet."

Dog owners add to the problem because they cannot view their family pets as dangerous animals.

"They're so willing to blame the children," she said.

Parents concerned about protecting their children often are told to keep them away from dogs—a difficult task when the dog is a favorite pet.

"Children really seem to like dogs like to get close to them," Dr. Karlson said. "If you have to monitor a child's behavior every minute, that's not the most effective way to deal with it."

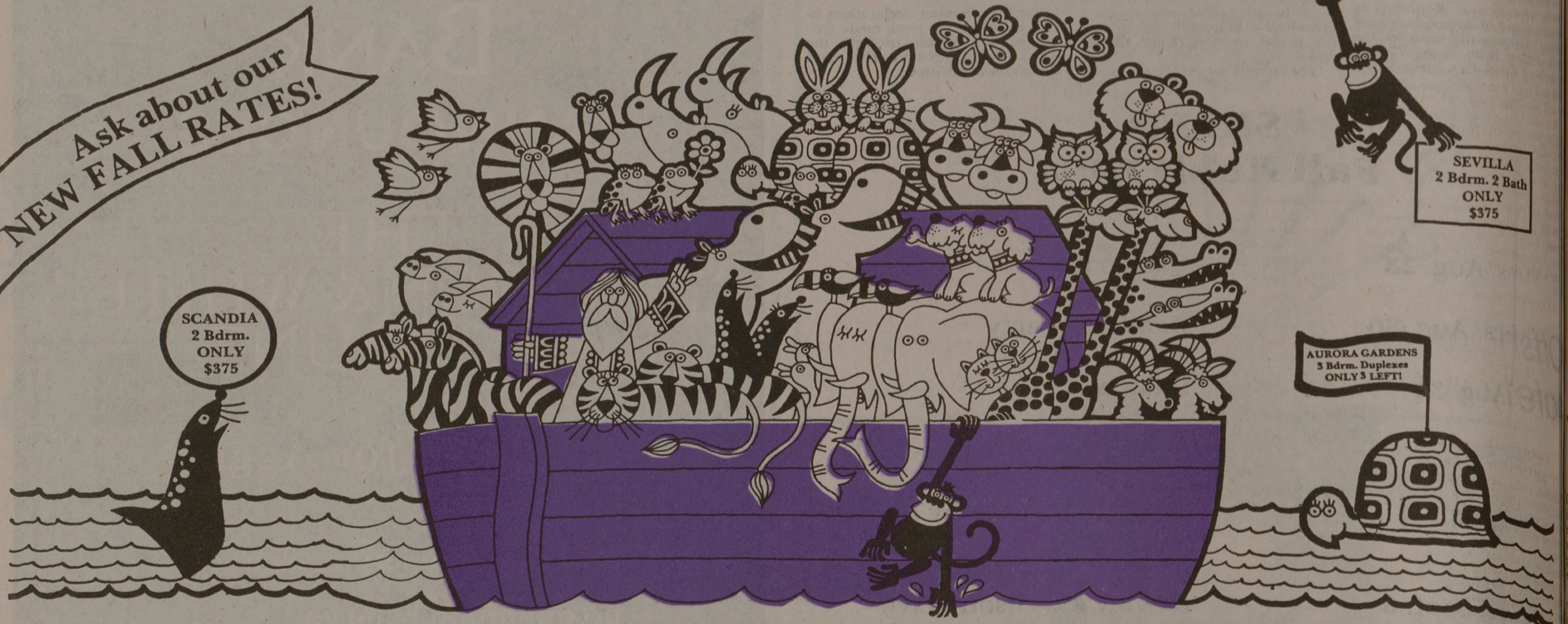
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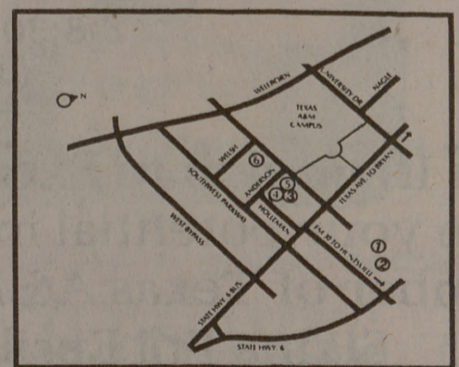
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